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AUTHOR	Sutton, Francis X.
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ABSTRACT

Ford Foundation support of international studies is assessed with the general trend displayed in tabular form. The figures show that slightly over 70 percent of the funds for support of international studies in the U. S. were supplied in this first two-thirds of the last decade. It is noted that it is normal for a foundation to enter heavily into a particular field for some years and then gradually to withdraw from it. This cyclical or impermanent character of foundation support is grounded in the basic principle that foundation funds should be used flexibly in application to emergent needs of society and not permanently committed to purposes chosen once and for all. Trends of foundation support and future foundation planning are discussed. Reference is made to the necessary diminution of the Ford Foundation total budgets. Other activities such as fellowships, research grants, and collaborative international research are also reviewed. (LBH)

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Mr. Sutton is deputy vice president of the International Division of the Ford Foundation. The following is adapted from remarks given at a conference on international education at Columbia University February 13 and 14, 1975.

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Because the resources of the Ford Foundation have diminished, I cannot depict a very abundant future for our support of international studies. The prospect is, however, by no means simply one of bleak desiccation. We intend to go on in some ways, and we are heartened by evidence that there are other resources, both public and private, to carry on many of the things we have been interested in. Future private support of international studies in this country seems destined to be less sizable than in the past, both absolutely and relative to public support, but we hope that, properly placed, it will still help important things get done.

The general trend of the Ford Foundation's support of international studies is displayed in the tables on pages 4 and 8. The figures show that the Foundation had committed about $306 million for international studies through 1973. Nearly $217 million of this was committed in the period 1960–67. Thus slightly over 70 per cent of the funds for support of international studies in this country (only very minor sums in this total were spent abroad) were supplied in the first two-thirds of the last decade. This pattern of concentration should be familiar foundation behavior. It is true that these were years in which the Ford Foundation's budgets were very ample. But it would be normal for a foundation to enter heavily into a particular field for some years and then gradually, with due prudence and responsibility, to withdraw from it. This cyclical or impermanent character of foundation support is, of course, grounded in the basic principle that foundation funds should be used flexibly in application to emergent needs

Table I

Ford Foundation Annual Commitments for International Studies (1951–1973)

1951	$ 919,175
1952	1,248,247
1953	2,610,764
1954	3,609,080
1955	3,725,699
1956	5,353,339
1957	6,102,941
1958	5,190,508
1959	4,859,050
1960	23,046,867
1961	24,367,100
1962	15,561,760
1963	15,489,916
1964	17,229,211
1965	46,704,460
1966	48,095,949
1967	26,097,450
1968	5,958,706
1969	6,449,027
1970	13,331,183
1971	9,464,756
1972	1[illegible].080,566
1973	9,938,995
Total	$306,434,574

of society and not permanently committed to purposes chosen once and for all. In keeping with this general policy and in expectation of a substantial increase in U.S. Government funding through the International Education Act, and perhaps through continuation of the National Defense Education Act, in 1967 we terminated our International Training and Research program, which had handled most of our funding.

With this crest of activity some years behind us, it has seemed to make sense to look back over the history of our support to inter-

national studies. A series of large grants we made to universities are at length running out and we are far enough from the excitement of their inception to have a reasonable hope of taking objective views of them. With the help of able consultants we are engaged in this task. Not surprisingly, the most fundamental observation we are making is that the Foundation's support coincided with a strong will on the part of universities in the fifties and sixties to internationalize their activities. We were working with an academic tide that has made American international scholarship much stronger than it was before, but may now be yielding to other tides. However much we may feel that international studies should always be high on academic agendas, we must in fairness realize that the decades of the fifties and sixties were times when international studies needed and received exceptional attention. In the years to come they are likely to share attention and resources with other concerns of universities, perhaps in a way that successful and maturing activities commonly must.

A sober measuring of the place that international studies have acquired in the broad corpus of American academic activities by the seventies suggests that we are at or near the end of a cycle of growth. Natural concerns appear now to continue the creative work made possible by exceptional attention and funding from the last years rather than with new building. Quite aside from the pressures of our diminishing resources and the expectation of other funding, it would be normal in this decade for foundation funding of international studies to diminish from the high levels of the mid-sixties and to shift its character and aspirations. It is a typical and proper question in the councils of foundations to ask more insistently each year if we have not moved from initiation and building to routine sustenance, and we have gradually experienced such questioning from our col-

leagues concerned with other fields and from the trustees who take a broad view of our Foundation's activities. The arguments for decline, as the figures shown suggest, have, since 1967, had persuasive, but not overwhelming, force. Our problem now is to determine what should be the continuing role of a foundation with strong international commitments but with a sense of having made a great push not so long ago.

A Wider Trend

It is worth pausing to remind ourselves of the coincidence of the end of cycle I have been talking about with a secular trend toward declining importance of foundation funding for scholarly activities in this country. It is rather painful but necessary to recognize that our present modesty is hardly likely to be a mere cyclical affair of depressed capital markets and high inflation. The foundations are unlikely ever to return to anything like the weight and importance they had in earlier decades of this century. In the domain of international studies one recalls the Education and World Affairs study of the funding "crisis" of 1966–67 that showed $24.6 million coming from the foundations in a total of $58 million of external funding for some thirty-six universities. Many would now be happy to live with such a crisis! And certainly one cannot foresee such absolute amounts of private funding or such relative importance in university budgets as these mid-sixties researchers found. A lessened role need not be a trivial one, we dare to hope, but it would be wrong to think that the foundations are likely again to try to make frontal assaults on major needs of American scholarship as we have in the past. The point ought perhaps not need to be made, but I find we are still too often flattered and simultaneously dismayed by expectations that we can meet needs that clearly run far beyond the scale of our resources.

Table II displays in somewhat more detail what has happened since our fiscal 1967. There was a spectacular drop from the last $26 million gush of International Training and Research funds to sums in the neighborhood of $6 million in 1968 and 1969. The larger figures in the period 1970–73 represented in part a response to the manifest distress in the universities when it became apparent that the International Education Act was not to be funded and other sources of support for international studies did not materialize. We responded with a program we called "special" and "transitional," which added $9 million to the funds that were already flowing through our regular budgets, to help universities that had had major grants under the ITR program. There was also in this period a reaffirmed interest in international studies among our staff generally.

The largest part of the Ford Foundation's international interests has been directed to the development of the poor countries. It was our intention after 1967 to continue this interest in full strength while we left to others the support of international studies in the United States. But it became apparent not only that there was distress from the diminution of funding in this country, but also that we needed to give careful regard to the scholarly work and training being done here as an important complement to our work in the less-developed countries. There is natural tension between commitment to the practical development problems of poor countries overseas and the support of scholarship in this country. There was indeed a time in the Ford Foundation's history when we avoided it by having different staffs deal with these two types of programs. After 1967 we made the same staff responsible for both, and our people have now had some years of experience in balancing the claims of overseas development and international scholarship. The competition between these two interests

Table II

Ford Foundation

Annual Commitments by Category

Year	International Studies	International Training and Research*	International Education and Exchanges**	Asia Studies	Mid-East and African Studies	Latin America Studies	European Studies***	Comparative Studies	Other
1968	$ 5,958,706	$ 250,000	$ 263,000	$ 2,133,959	$ 750,000	$ 590,947	$ 1,875,000	$ 95,800	
1969	6,449,027	279,113	530,000	1,267,258	763,300	589,994	2,6 9,362	400,000	
1970	13,331,183	2,520,622	360,000	4,063,992	1,072,500	710,000	4,212,070	89,999	302,000
1971	9,464,756	2,933,700	362,000	2,201,600	546,012	1,265,200	1,302,694	753,550	100,000
1972	11,080,566	1,816,908	531,200	3,774,765	1,117,505	1,611,900	1,908,288	320,000	
1973	9,938,995	220,500	487,500	2,206,175	771,500	1,185,000	3,478,400	1,309,200	280,720
Total	$56,223,233	$8,020,843	$2,473,700	$15,647,749	$5,020,817	$5,903,041	$15,395,814	$2,968,549	$682,720

* general support for international training and research in the developed countries
** general support for service institutions in international education and exchanges
*** includes Western and Eastern Europe (including the U.S.S.R.)

persists, but their complementarity has also won persuasive force.

Future Foundation Planning

Looking now to the future of Ford Foundation activity, I must first refer to the necessary diminution of our total budgets. The Foundation is planning to reduce its annual commitments to approximately 50 per cent of their recent level by 1978, and the International Division of the Foundation must share in the reductions. We are not suffering disproportionately as a division, but our officers and trustees feel that, within the concerns we can sustain, first priority should be given to poor people in poor countries. This means that fields like agriculture and population in countries like Indonesia, Bangladesh, India, Tanzania, or Nigeria must be protected as we reduce what we do. Recent total commitments of the International Division have exceeded $80 million annually, and they must decline over the next three years to something approximating half that level. Favored fields, such as those I have mentioned, can exceed half present levels, but only by reducing others more severely. The outlook for our support of international studies in this country is thus one of sharp decline from the figures for recent years. We are headed down towards levels about one-third of recent ones by 1978, and thus to sums between $3 and $4 million per annum. We wish, of course, that we could be thinking of larger sums. Many months of painful debate have been spent in planning these reductions and establishing priorities for this and other subjects. Against some pressure to abandon the support of international studies entirely, there have been strong reaffirmations of the importance of our maintaining some support of them and judgments that we can still fulfill important needs with the reduced sums that will be available.

In planning what we could try to do in the

next years we have had to make a clear distinction between two broad strands of past activity. We have had, on the one hand, major programs of support to individual universities and to research and training centers within them. On the other hand, we have supported national programs such as the joint committees of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies, the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, and various area studies associations. It has been clear to us for some time that we would have to terminate most of our direct support to universities, and we have been in the course of doing so. We are acutely conscious of the dependence of many centers and university programs on our past funding and of the difficulties in the present financial climate of replacing these funds. In working out terminal support we have been trying to leave as many centers and programs as we can in as good condition as possible. We are heartened in this task by strong commitments of university administrations and in particular by evidence that the National Defense Education Act support bids fair to continue. In a very limited number of cases where centers or facilities clearly have a national or international importance we are making what we call "tie-off" grants that will be matched by other monies and used as a capital fund or endowment to provide modest core support for an indefinite future. A recent grant of $300,000 for Yale's Economic Growth Center is an example, and we hope that there will be half a dozen or so more such grants, although they are very difficult to work out with the limited funds at our disposal.

Fellowships and Research Grants

The other side of our past activities—namely the support of national agencies that fund fellowships, research grants-in-aid, or organize other activities for the advancement of the various fields—has persistently emerged

in our discussions as meriting and requiring continued support. The largest part of this funding has gone to provide fellowships and research grants-in-aid through the agencies of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies. Now that the Foreign Area Fellowship Program has been dissolved into its areal parts and consolidated with the joint area committees, these committees, along with the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), are the principal channels through which the councils support international studies. Except for IREX, the Foundation was for many years the sole supporter of these various activities under the aegis of the councils, and in recent years our total annual funding has amounted to $4 million or a bit more. As pressures on our budgets have grown, questions have been repeatedly asked about the need to continue this large funding, but we have been persuaded that we should try to sustain it even while other support for international studies was being severely cut.

It is now unfortunately clear, however, that we could maintain past levels of support to these activities only at the expense of nearly all our other support for international studies in this country. Such radical abandonment of the wide variety of research and training, planning, organizing, and conferring that we have been funding does not seem sensible or prudent to us. Both through our engagement with the scholarly community in this country and through our many activities overseas, we are conscious of a variety of needs—in research on special topics, in international linkages, in organizational developments—that change from time to time and need a flexible capacity in foundation funding if they are to be helped.

We are thus faced with the necessity of gradually reducing the monies we can supply for nationally competitive fellowships and research awards. Vigorous efforts by the leader-

Funding for International Education

By Francis X. Sutton
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ship of the research councils have already been rewarded by important accessions of other funding—notably from the National Endowment for the Humanities for IREX and from the Mellon Foundation for East Asian studies. All of us must hope that these efforts will continue to be rewarded and that the overall level of funding will not sink. But even if we did not have to reduce Ford Foundation outlays, we would in any case think it time to weigh priorities among the uses of such funds, as we have been trying to do. Let me sketch briefly some rather tentative conclusions from this thinking.

Collaborative International Research

The coming of a certain maturity to international studies in this country, and a rapidly changing situation abroad, have brought us to states markedly different from those we faced a decade or so ago. The change from dearth to threatened or actual glut in the numbers of area specialists and other international scholars in this country is one fundamental point. It produces a natural tendency to shift emphasis away from encouraging new scholarly recruits toward other needs. Abroad there is a marked growth in numbers and confidence of scholars in many of the countries we Americans have been studying as area specialists. In the Ford Foundation we have always been concerned with both kinds of growth in scholarly competences. Our initial attention to the support of international studies in this country was motivated primarily by the need for American capacity to understand places in which the United States had become important and that were important to us. Now the perspective has shifted, and we are more impressed with the need for a community of scholarship that brings together our scholars with those from the various areas of the world. It now seems obvious that the great achievements of the past decades in building scholarly resources in

this country do not and should not serve this country alone; they have an international potential that makes their continued vigor and quality of much more than American concern, and that can only be realized if our people are in good contact with colleagues abroad. This means there is a continuing case for research support, for travel and exchange, and for growing mechanisms of international collaboration in seminars, projects, and all the many forms in which common scholarly interests are pursued.

It is cause for serious concern that the financial difficulties of universities are putting more and more limitations on what can be done at individual campuses with their own funds. As our support has declined, universities are, for example, less able to bring visiting scholars from abroad, or to assist in the publication of monographs and other scholarly writings. As we must shift the balance of Foundation assistance to national agencies, the array of possible needs that might concern them widens. We have been asking ourselves questions such as: Is it possible to provide funds for visiting scholars or for publication assistance through a national mechanism in a fair and adequate way?

The evolution of the joint committees of ACLS and SSRC displays various promising adaptations to the newer situation and its needs. Increasingly these committees are reaching out beyond American borders to include scholars from the areas of their concern, and their activities include collaborative research seminars and projects. Combining the traditional responsibilities of these committees for postdoctoral research awards with responsibilities for fellowships that were previously segregated under the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, requires balancing of claims at the two levels. The committees are still rather new in these ventures; but they seem to be probing sensitively toward a position where their value is not to be measured

simply by the numbers of fellowships and research awards they are able to distribute, but as vital mechanisms in linking American and foreign scholarship.

For other sorts of needs we find ourselves engaged with the area associations, the American Institute of Indian Studies, the Association of Research Libraries, the Overseas Liaison Committee and the International Education Project of the American Council on Education. I should expect that we shall continue our engagement with such bodies as they may be equipped to deal with particular problems or needs. But there will remain other types of projects in which our support will be direct. Research projects will continue to arise that need more than a few thousand dollars and that have a powerful appeal in their quality and importance. Sometimes these must simply be dealt with *ad hoc*, as we have recently done with a project on Islam and cultural change based at the University of Chicago, or with the "1980s" project of the Council on Foreign Relations. Such cases must be few in number. We are anxious not to be scattered and impulsive in what we respond to, and a preference for more systematic support of a series of grants in a broad subject or area shows in some of our actions. Examples are our recent and current research competitions on population, on the common problems of industrialized societies, on the international economic order, and on Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In these competitions we are able to fund perhaps eight to fifteen projects at a time, costing some tens of thousands of dollars apiece. A little mental arithmetic on the budgetary figures noted earlier makes it clear that we will be hard put to repeat these ventures in the coming years, but we think they fill important gaps or stimulate work on important subjects, and we will probably be trying from time to time to accumulate the necessary funds to do a few more.

The array of matters we try to deal with thus remains quite extensive and the methods multiple. But the basic outlines of our present thinking can be summarized briefly:

We no longer have the powers to mount the kind of program for major development of international studies that we once did, or perhaps even to sustain a flow of research and fellowship monies that can be a major factor in the ongoing finance of international studies in this country.

We are persuaded, however, that there are national needs and mechanisms that can be addressed and sustained valuably with the funds we can foresee using.

We are impressed with the need for linking American scholarship with its international counterparts, and our own overseas engagements give us a special awareness and perhaps special aptitudes for addressing these needs.

We regret the very limited capacity we shall have to respond to the needs of particular centers and universities, but hope that the indirect benefits to them through national agencies and the various projects and programs we support will not be insubstantial.